



TELECOMMUNICATIONS DIVISION

AGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS REPRESENTATIVE

BULLETIN 03-10

DATE: September 19, 2003

SUBJECT: CALNET ALERT - POTENTIAL FRAUDULENT CALLING ACTIVITY – TOLL FREE TELEPHONE LINES

ACTION:

- Chief ATRs should provide this information to your other departmental ATRs, to the appropriate accounting staff responsible for paying CALNET State Integrated Billing System (SIBS) invoices, and others as needed.
- Carefully review your SIBS invoices. If suspicious calling activity seems to be occurring, especially to your toll-free telephone line(s), contact the SIBS billing specialists at (888) 791-7427 to report the activity and request a review of the calls.
- Alert the Department of General Services Telecommunications Division (DGS-TD) of significant suspected fraudulent calling activity. The DGS-TD can then work closely with the CALNET billing specialists to help resolve issues.

BENEFITS:

- Reporting suspicious calling activity to the SIBS billing specialists will help identify possible fraud or harassment, and enable actions that might help prevent future occurrences.
- The agency/department may receive credits for calls determined to be fraudulent.

KEY POINTS:

- Some state agencies/departments may be receiving what appears to be a number of inappropriate calls to their toll free telephone lines (the cause could be fraud, harassment, unusual calling patterns, or technical issues).
- The calls to the toll-free numbers appear to be predominantly from pay telephones. Agencies or departments with toll free numbers are charged a set "Pay Use Charge" plus a charge for the call length, so inappropriate calls add up.
- CALNET customers, especially those with toll free accounts, should regularly examine monthly SIBS invoices for indications of inappropriate calling activity.
- Watch for a pattern of repetitive, short duration calls, i.e. 20 seconds. The calls will often originate from the same telephone numbers in close succession.

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- Contact the SIBS billing specialists at (888) 791-7427 to report suspicious calling activity and request a review of the calls. As necessary, action will be taken to help prevent recurrence (i.e. block calls from the originating telephone, etc.)
- In general, the CALNET vendors determine when it is necessary to involve law enforcement (i.e. for fraud), and coordinates those joint investigations; however, depending on the situation, the DGS or customers may wish to directly pursue legal action and/or obtain the involvement of law enforcement.

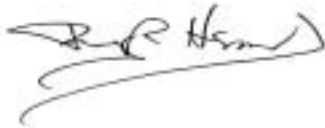
BACKGROUND:

In March 2002, two Berkeley, California men were indicted on federal charges for using an automatic re-dialer to repeatedly call toll-free numbers from payphone lines they leased from SBC (San Francisco Chronicle, March 9, 2002). Payphone providers such as these two men, receive the set "Pay Use Charge" from completed 800 calls. Therefore, the more toll-free calls made from their leased phones, the more revenue they received.

Recently, similar inappropriate calls to toll-free telephone lines affecting at least one state agency were discovered. This activity is being investigated as potential fraud or possibly harassment. Therefore, this warning is being provided to alert agencies to carefully review their bills, and to follow up as needed.

To view previous ATR bulletins, refer to the DGS-TD website at <http://www.td.dgs.ca.gov> (click on Network Publications on the right side of the page, then scroll down to the ATR bulletins).

For questions regarding this bulletin or other telecommunications issues, please call the DGS-TD Resource Communications Center at (916) 657-9903 (CALNET 437-9903), and ask to speak to a Customer Account Manager.



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BRH:SB:pcr